

2026 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF CHANGES

CHAPTER 10: OBJECTIVES, POLICY AND SCOPE OF OPERATIONS

Mission Statement: Agencies referenced in the Mission Statement have been updated to reflect organizational changes in 2026. The U.S. Wildland Fire Service replaced the BLM, BIA, USFWS, and NPS.

NIFC Director’s Delegations: Agencies referenced in the NIFC Director’s Delegations have been updated to reflect organizational changes in 2026. The U.S. Wildland Fire Service replaced the BLM, BIA, USFWS, and NPS.

National Surge Packages: Removed. NMAC will issue a memo if they would like to exercise surge packages in 2026.

Initial Attack Response Plans: Added in 2026 with three subsections titled Response Plans, Daily Resource Status, and Operational Status Tracking.

Compacts: Removed the following paragraph *“Recognition of the need for consistency and continuity has led to the development of the Alliance of Forest Fire Compacts. The Alliance includes all eight forest fire compacts in the U.S. and Canada. More information is located at affcompacts.org.”*

Other Nations Support for Large Scale Mobilizations: Removed lengthy paragraph about the Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP) and replaced with *“The NICC coordinates Requests for Assistance (RFA) for firefighting support from foreign countries that are under arrangements with the US Forest Service and Department of Interior, namely Canada, Mexico, Australia, and New Zealand. The NICC will also assist with requests for firefighting support to other foreign countries in coordination with the US Forest Service Disaster Assistance Support Program (DASP) through Department of State's Office of International Disaster Response.”*

CHAPTER 20: OVERHEAD AND TEAMS

NMAC Management of IMTs: Added the following language *“Rationales are required by NMAC at PL 5 and when situations warrant the need for a rationale.”* Added the following statement *“The rationale will be submitted by a Coordinating Group Representative or the GACC.”*

CIMT Configuration: Replaced 2025 language with *“CIMTs will be considered unavailable for assignment without the minimum 24 positions that must be filled (which includes ordered, filled and enroute) at the time of CIMT mobilization. This minimum ensures every CIMT has the core capability to safely and effectively manage a complex incident from the initial transition period forward. Beyond the minimum of 24, the roster size will be based upon the incident complexities. Additional personnel, trainees, assistants, technical specialists and expanded Command & General (C&G) positions may be added through negotiations between the IC and ordering unit representative.”*

CIMT Configuration: Added a table describing the “Minimum CIMT Mobilization Configuration (24 Personnel).”

CIMT National Rotation: Updated and added the following language “For 2026, all 38 interagency CIMTs are eligible for mobilization through the national rotation. Additional teams (such as state or local teams) may be integrated appropriately by the GA with NMAC coordination. (See section on Surge Capacity IMTs below.)

- *GACCs will ensure their respective CIMTs are available for national rotation and their roster in IROC meets the mobilization configuration standards.*
- *The national rotation switches every seven (7) days on Thursday, effective 0001.*
 - *All GA internal rotations will rotate on Thursday.*
- *All nine GAs appear in the national rotation each week during the year.*
- *The starting order is alphabetical and continues indefinitely:*
 1. *Alaska*
 2. *California*
 3. *Eastern*
 4. *Great Basin*
 5. *Northern Rockies*
 6. *Northwest*
 7. *Rocky Mountain*
 8. *Southern*
 9. *Southwest*
- *The national rotation will be posted by April 1 annually.*
- *The national rotation will be identified by GA. Each GA will determine which team fills the order based on internal rotations and availability.*
 - *GAs are expected to effectively manage workload distribution across all CIMTs to mitigate fatigue, enable team members to meet home unit responsibilities, provide experience opportunities for all CIMTs, meet training and workforce succession goals, and ensure availability of CIMTs nationally when competition exists.*
 - *NMAC strongly encourages GAs to consider utilizing the national rotation to ensure the distribution of assignments and days committed to incidents.*
 - *NMAC and the GAs has a management goal of three CIMT assignments per calendar year based on historical data.*

National CIMT Coordinator: Combined the NICC CIMT Coordinator and NMAC CIMT Coordinator into the National CIMT Coordinator.

National CIMT Coordinator: Updated the following standard practices.

- *All requests (including extension requests) for CIMTs and NIMOs must be approved by NMAC. This applies to all assignments, internal and external to the GA.*
- *NMAC requires GAs to submit the [Request for CIMT Extension or Assignment](#) for any CIMT request at PL5. These will be submitted by the GACC or a Coordinating Group representative.*
- *Reallocation of assigned CIMTs within the GA will be done in coordination with the NMAC liaison and the National CIMT Coordinator.*

- *When allocating CIMTs, NMAC will consider multiple criteria including, but not limited to: national rotation, availability, number of assignments, workload distribution, and travel/logistical considerations.*
- *Requests to NMAC for a CIMT to be available again prior to the 7-day unavailability period should occur prior to the start of the 7 days. Only in exceptional circumstances will a CIMT be asked by NMAC within the 7-day period to roster prior to the end of the 7 days.*
- *Surge capacity CIMTs (which may include state, local government, or ad hoc IMTs) will be part of the allocation and factored in with the above criteria as appropriate.*
- *CIMTs may be allocated to incidents up to 3 days prior to their availability.*
- *To remain flexible in case a higher priority arises and the CIMT needs to be reassigned, CIMTs will not be filled in IROC until they are available or until it's necessary to begin travel.*
- *If CIMT availability is insufficient for potential emerging incidents. As part of the daily prioritization process:*
 - *GAs with multiple committed CIMTs, in coordination with the National CIMT Coordinator, will reprioritize internally to meet any emerging needs.*
 - *GAs with multiple committed CIMTs may be asked to identify CIMT(s) to be reassigned for emerging and exigent needs in a bordering GA.*
 - *All Gas will assure appropriate use of IMTs.*
- *CIMT extensions should be considered and utilized to manage the number of transitions on an incident, to mitigate limited availability of CIMTs, and to reach suppression objectives.*
- *NMAC supports internal GA reallocation. A request is still required when reallocating to ensure the CIMT goes to the highest priority need, which could be outside the GA.*

CIMT Assignments for Suppression Repair: Removed, duplicate language.

Interagency Buying Teams (BUYT): Removed. NMAC will release a memo instructing the user community on the new DOI and FS purchasing programs.

Payment Teams: Removed, no longer used.

CHAPTER 30: CREWS

U.S. Forest Service Contract Crews: Added the following language *“Type 2 contract crews and Type 2 Initial Attack contract crews must be ordered to a specific reporting location, identified by a physical address such as a designated incident, forest or district office, or other government-specified location.”*

Type 2 and Type 2IA Crews: Added two tables describing minimum mobilization standards for each crew type.

CHAPTER 40: EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Radio Ordering: Added the following language, *“If the ICP or base camp is unknown, the requested equipment must be shipped to the closest field office, ranger station, or other designated government building.”*

CHAPTER 50: AIRCRAFT

Sterile Cockpit: Added the following language *“Sterile cockpit rules apply within a 5-mile radius of the airport. The flight crew will not perform radio or cockpit communication during that time that is not directly related to safe flight of the aircraft from taxi to 5 miles out and from 5 miles out until clearing the active runway. This would consist of reading checklists, communication with ATC, flight service stations, Unicom, or other aircraft with the intent of ensuring separation or complying with ATC requirements. Communications by passengers or air crew members can be accomplished when the audio panels can be isolated and do not interfere with flight operations of the flight crew.”*

Exception: *When conducting firefighting missions within 5 miles of an uncontrolled airport, maintain a sterile cockpit until departing the traffic pattern and reaching final altitude. Monitor common traffic advisory frequency (CTAF) frequency if feasible while engaged in firefighting activities. Monitor CTAF as soon as practical upon leaving the fire and returning to the uncontrolled airport. When conducting firefighting missions within class B, C, or D airspace, notify dispatch that ATC communications will have priority over dispatch communications.”*

Non-Federally Approved Cooperator Aircraft: Added a link to the new Non-Federally Approved Cooperator Aircraft form.

FS CWN Helicopters: Added the following language *“The incident or dispatch office will communicate any intent to fully demobilize and release a CWN helicopter from an incident to NICC, who will relay the information to the National Rotor-Wing Coordinator as soon as practicable. If the release is anticipated 24 hours or more in advance, notification will be made at that time.”*

FS EU Helicopters : Added the following language *“Any intent to release EU helicopters from a contract extension will be coordinated with the National Rotor-Wing Coordinator, no less than 24 hours prior to release. Only the Contracting Officer and COR have the authority to release any FS helicopter from contract.”*

MATOC Payload Category Tables: Updated for 2026.

Rappellers: Add the following language *“When existing border agreements exist between GACCs, IA loads may be placed forest to forest, if the resource is the closest available. Courtesy notification shall be made to the GACC(s) and NICC at the time the order is placed.”*

Frequencies: Updated to reflect that Frequencies are now “F” requests.

Temporary Flight Restrictions: Added the following language *“Temporary Flight Restrictions (TFRs) regulate the National Airspace System (NAS). The Geographic Area Coordination Center or an assigned Airspace Coordinator (ASCO) will originate TFRs. TFRs are not an administrative function of a local dispatch center.”*

Airspace Coordination: Added the following language *“The National Airspace Coordinator will coordinate Airspace Coordinator (ASCO) assignments to support regional and geographical airspace coordination.”*

CHAPTER 60: PREDICTIVE SERVICES

No changes for 2026.

CHAPTER 70: INCIDENT ADMINISTRATION

Cost Coding: Removed entire section.

CHAPTER 80: FORMS

Added: Non-Federally Approved Cooperator Aircraft Form